

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 04190 231422Z

44

ACTION ABF-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 ISO-00 FS-01 OC-06 CCO-00 A-01 /016 W

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P R 231349Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7164

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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DEPT FOR A/BF

PARIS FOR RFC LERCHBAUM

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: AFIN AFSP UR

SUBJ: US CURRENCY SHIPMENTS

REF: STATE 058500

1. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS RISK INVOLVED IN POUCHING OR TRANSPORTING CURRENCY AND IT IS PRECISELY FOR THIS REASON COURIER PROTECTION HAS BEEN REQUESTED AND APPROVED BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY NAEHER. SHOULD COURIER POUCH DESTINED MOSCOW BE "VANDALIZED OR OTHERWISE LOST" DAMAGE TO NATIONAL SECURITY WOULD IN MOST CASES FAR OUTWEIGH LOSS OF CURRENCY TRANSPORTED. RISKS ARE INHERENT IN TRANSPORT OF ANY MATERIAL, WHETHER CLASSIFIED INFORMATION OR CURRENCY. U.S. GOVERNMENT REGULARLY ACCEPTS THESE RISKS AND ATTEMPTS TO MINIMIZE THEM THROUGH USE OF COURIERS. AT PRESENT TIME, COURIERS TRAVEL ONLY IN PAIRS IN SOVIET BLOC COUNTRIES.

2. FIVE SHIPMENTS OF 5,000.00 DOLLARS OVER NEXT SIX WEEKS WOULD ADEQUATELY MEET NEEDS IF DEPT WISHES SPREAD RISK IN THIS FASHION. THIS WOULD REPRESENT AN ESTIMATED THREE MONTHS SUPPLY.

3. AMERICAN EXPRESS DOES NOT SELL GREEN DOLLARS IN MOSCOW. TRAVEL-
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 04190 231422Z

ERS CHECKS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR SALE BUT NONE HAVE

BEEN AVAILABLE SINCE FIRST OF YEAR.

4. CASHIER KEEPS FUNDS IN MOSLER SAFE APPROVED BY SECURITY OFFICER
OFFICE IS UNDER REGULAR SECURITY PATROL BY MARINE GUARDS
DURING NON-WORKING HOURS.

5. THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CONTROL PAYMENTS TO AMERICAN
EMPLOYEES OF AMERICAN EMBASSY. THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT DOES HAVE A
LARGE NUMBER OF STORES KNOWN AS "DOLLAR GASTRONOMES" AND "BERYOSKAS"
WHERE FOODSTUFFS AND OTHER PRODUCTS ARE SOLD ONLY THROUGH PAYMENT
IN GREEN DOLLARS OR OTHER HARD CURRENCY. THESE ARE OFFICIAL OUTLETS,
NOT ONLY APPROVED BUT OPERATED BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AS A MEANS OF
ACQUIRING HARD CURRENCY. U.S. GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES REGULARLY USE
THESE OUTLETS WITH OFFICIAL APPROVAL OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY SINCE
MANY PRODUCTS NOT AVAILABLE ON THE LOCAL MARKET ARE SOLD THERE.

6. WHILE VISITING DELEGATIONS MAY ROUTINELY BE ADVISED TO CARRY U.S.
CURRENCY FOR ALL OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL NEEDS, THE FACT IS THAT
OFFICIAL
DELEGATIONS DO OFTEN EXPERIENCE ADDITIONAL NEEDS FOR CURRENCY.
THIS OCCURS NOT ONLY WITH STATE DELEGATIONS
BUT DELEGATIONS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS.
IT MIGHT BE MENTIONED TO TREASURY THAT ON THE OCCASION OF
SECRETARY SHULTZ'S LAST VISIT MEMBERS OF HIS DELEGATION ASKED
FOR AND RECEIVED ACCOMMODATION EXCHANGE IN GREEN DOLLARS, AS
WELL AS RUBLES. COMMERCE SECRETARY DENT EXPECTED ARRIVE HERE
APRIL 7 AND IF SIMILAR REQUESTS ARE MADE EMBASSY WISHES BE IN
POSITION TO ACCOMMODATE. CURRENTLY, COMMERCE PERSONNEL HERE FOR
"STANKI" AND HEALTH EXHIBITS ARE BEING REQUIRED BY SOVIET AUTH-
ORITIES TO PAY ALL HOTEL EXPENSES IN GREEN DOLLARS. PERSONAL
CHECKS ARE NOT ACCEPTED, TRAVELLERS CHECKS ARE UNAVAILABLE. EMBASSY
CANNOT AND WILL NOT ADAPT PAROCHIAL ATTITUDE THAT THIS IS
"COMMERCE PROBLEM". U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS DETERMINED THAT THESE
EXHIBITS ARE IN U.S. NATIONAL INTEREST AND IT IS INCUM-
BENT UPON EMBASSY TO SUPPORT AND ASSIST ALL U.S. GOVERNMENT
PERSONNEL OFFICIALLY ASSIGNED OR DETAILED TO THIS POST.

7. IN PAST, PERSONNEL ASSIGNED THIS POST ON TDY IN EUROPE HAVE
ACTED AS ESCORTS FOR TRANSPORT OF CURRENCY TO MEET POST NEEDS.
POST CONSIDERS THIS NEITHER DESIRABLE NOR PRACTICAL WITH THE
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 04190 231422Z

MOUNTING WORKLOAD AT THIS POST. CURRENTLY, ALL POST PERSONNEL
FULLY OCCUPIED WITH SECRETARY'S VISIT, AND WITHIN TEN DAYS HIS
DEPARTURE SECRETARY DENT WILL ARRIVE. IF FURTHER EXPLANATION
OF LOCAL SITUATION REQUIRED, SUGGEST JACK MATLOCK IN EUR/SOV
BE CONTACTED SOONEST.
STOESSEL

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